

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA**  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY**

**Subject**

Staged Construction of Offsite Flood Control and Drainage Facilities  
Provided in the Development or Subdivision of Property by the Private Sector

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**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to permit staged construction of offsite flood control and drainage facilities by the private sector when there is a demonstrated and substantial public, private, or environmental benefit; and to establish criteria for staged construction which would provide a facility that is suitable for acceptance for maintenance, is compatible with expansion to the ultimate facility requirements, and does not increase County of District liability.

**Background**

The development of property usually results in an increase in storm water runoff which may impact other properties. That impact could be to increase an existing flood, erosion, or sedimentation hazard, or to create such a hazard. In order to mitigate these impacts, a subdivider may be required to construct flood control or drainage facilities offsite, or outside the boundaries of the property being developed.

A major problem with offsite requirements occurs when imposed on minor subdivisions and lot splits. This type of development has a major accumulative impact on flood control and drainage. The offsite requirements to mitigate this impact usually result in a major financial impact on small subdividers, or single lot construction of personal homes and businesses.

Current County regulations require that offsite facilities provided by a subdivider have capacity to convey the runoff expected as a result of ultimate development within the watershed. This requirement sometimes results in an ultimate facility where its full capacity may not be utilized for as many as 20 years or more. It is the intent of this policy to allow the ultimate facility to be constructed in stages under certain conditions. Staged construction is common practice with most public agencies, and this policy would extend that practice to the private sector when approved by the County.

In many cases, the cost of providing ultimate offsite facilities is prohibitive for both the subdivider and public entity. In such cases, significant private and public benefits may not be realized. Allowing staged construction could reduce offsite costs to a point where a project is economically feasible, and defer ultimate facility construction to meet future capacity requirements. This, in turn, would allow the immediate realization of both public and private benefits. It would also provide a means of distributing offsite costs for both the staged and ultimate facility, to future subdividers through the collection of fees.

This policy is necessary to set forth the conditions under which the County will permit staged construction of offsite flood control and drainage facilities. It is also necessary to

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provide criteria to insure that the facility provided through staged construction will not increase County liability.

**Policy**

It is the policy of the Board of Supervisors acting as the Board of Directors of the San Diego County Flood Control District that:

**DEFINITIONS**

1. Design Flood: A flood of designated frequency that serves as a basis for determining the required hydraulic properties of flood control and drainage works of improvement.
2. San Diego County Standards: Adopted County Standards governing the design flood and the structural, geometric, and hydraulic design of flood control and drainage facilities.
3. Ultimate Construction: Flood control and drainage facilities which provide flow capacity for the design flood as designated by the San Diego County Standards.
4. Ultimate Rights-of-Way: The rights-of-way required to accommodate ultimate construction in accordance with San Diego County Standards.
5. Staged Construction: A flood control or drainage facility, provided by the development or subdivision of property by the private sector, that is constructed to a County Standard regarding materials and method of construction which does not compromise the ultimate facility, and having a flow capacity as set forth herein under Design Criteria, but may require additional flood carrying capacity at some time in the future.
6. Ultimate Development: The total development of land to the use and purpose as shown in the Land-Use Element of the San Diego County General Plan, and the General Plans of cities as they affect hydrologic runoff conditions.
7. Currently Proposed Development: That development within a watershed for which application is currently in process through a division of land, special use permit, building permit, or any other procedure leading to the alteration of hydrologic runoff conditions, including all such applications that may be in process within the watershed, including any portion of the watershed within a city.
8. Hydrologic Runoff Conditions: Those conditions which determine the quantity of storm water runoff, including but not limited to, slope of terrain, impervious area, vegetative cover, soil type, and type of storm water conveyance system.

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9. General Public Benefits: Benefits provided by a proposed project, including but not limited to:

A. Assistance to the community in overcoming flood hazards which are beyond their own abilities to solve, and if not resolved may cause serious damage to other private or public properties.

B. Elimination or substantial reduction of public health problems as a result of flood waters.

C. Protection of community property values from the depressing effect of floods and poor drainage in any part of the community.

D. Elimination of vehicular and pedestrian traffic hazards due to existing inadequate drainage conditions.

E. Decreased maintenance costs of flood control and drainage facilities in the zones.

F. Prevention or control of erosion and sedimentation of watercourses, lagoons, lakes, etc.

G. Provisions for recreation or water conservation uses.

H. Removal of a definite threat to life or limb.

I. Removal of an identifiable District liability.

J. Facilitates agricultural uses which are a significant public benefit.

**DESIGN CRITERIA**

10. Board of Directors Policy I-52 (Stabilized Channels for Flood Control) and other applicable County Standards shall govern the structural design and construction of staged flood control and drainage facilities.

11. Design flood flows for staged facilities shall be calculated for the hydrologic conditions of development and flood frequency as stated under A and B below. The larger value obtained under A or B shall be used for design of staged facilities. However, paragraph (aa) of Subsection (10) of Section 5.7 of Article V of the San Diego County Standards as amended 1 July 1975 shall apply in all cases:

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**A. Hydrologic Runoff Conditions of Existing and Currently Proposed Development in the Watershed:**

1. 50-year frequency flood when the tributary watershed area is less than one (1) square mile.

2. 100-year frequency flood when the tributary watershed area is one (1) square mile or greater.

**B. Hydrologic Runoff Conditions of Ultimate Development in the Watershed:**

1. 10-year frequency flood when the tributary watershed area is less than one (1) square mile.

2. 25-year frequency flood when the tributary watershed area is one (1) square mile or greater.

12. The developer shall be required to submit all required hydrologic and hydraulic calculations, prepared and signed by a registered civil engineer in the State of California.

13. Improvements provided by stage construction shall be compatible with the ultimate improvements that may be provided in the future in accordance with an adopted Master Plan of Flood Control and Drainage Facilities.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

14. It is the intent of this policy to allow staged construction of required off-site flood control and drainage facilities when there is a demonstrated and substantial public, private, or environmental benefit.

15. The subdivider shall provide the rights-of-way required for ultimate construction. If the subdivider, acting in good faith, has clearly demonstrated he/she is unable to secure rights-of-way, and the proposed project will provide general public benefits, the Board of Supervisors/Directors may contract to obtain the rights-of-way through condemnation at the total expense and cost of the subdivider.

16. All subdivisions or developments, in excess of one single family dwelling unit, occurring subsequent to construction of a staged facility, and which contribute storm water runoff to said facility, shall be reviewed to determine their effect on the capacity of the existing staged facility. Additional capacity shall be provided when necessary in accordance with this policy.

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Sunset Date

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 12-31-09.

Board Action

7-2-74 (50)

10-4-77 (13)

8-22-89 (47)

11-01-00 (7)

08-07-02 (5)

CAO Reference

1. Department of Public Works